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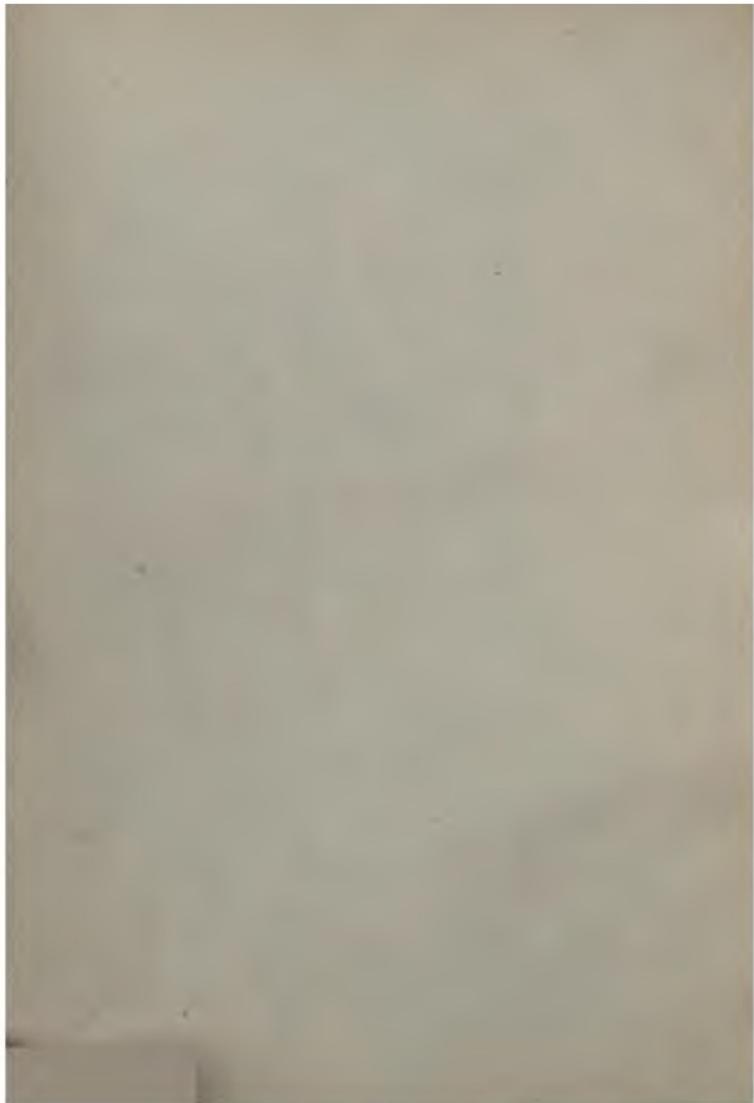


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From Howard Cooper Johnson Jr.
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A D D R E S S

TO THE

MEMBERS

OF THE

MONTHLY MEETING OF FRIENDS

OF PHILADELPHIA,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

MARRIAGE. •

1868:

STUCKEY, PRINTER, 624 WEAVER STREET,
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TO THE
M E M B E R S
. OF THE
MONTHLY MEETING OF FRIENDS
OF PHILADELPHIA.

DEAR FRIENDS:—

Some changes having recently been made in the Discipline of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, by which Friends intending marriage with those not in membership with us, but who manifest an interest in the maintenance of our testimonies, may have their

marriages accomplished according to our Order, we believe it right to present some of the views and principles of the Society of Friends in relation to Marriage, and to publish some portions of the Discipline, including the revised clause, for circulation among our members.

Considering the vast importance of marriage connections, both to the parties themselves and their offspring, we would strongly urge upon all who have such engagements in prospect, early to acquaint their parents and guardians with their intentions, seeking such sympathy and counsel as will strengthen them in a wise and judicious course, so that rash and ill-judged connections may be avoided, and that this life-long covenant may not

be entered into without mature and solid reflection.

Parents are tenderly advised to exercise a religious care over their children, endeavoring by right example as well as precept early to instruct them in the principles of Truth, and to impress their minds with the duty of religiously observing them; discouraging associations likely to retard their moral and spiritual growth, and encouraging such as are calculated to promote and increase their interest in our Religious Society.

Marriages of our Members with persons of other religious principles are discouraged by the Discipline, for experience proves that those who enter into this close relation with-

out a common ground of religious conviction are apt to find many causes of difference throughout life, especially in the management of their children.

Marriage engagements should never be entered into without humbly waiting upon the Lord for that wisdom which is profitable to direct. If this is sought and obtained, the Divine blessing may be expected to follow; and, in proportion as we live near to the Fountain of Divine strength, we shall experience its sustaining Power through the trials of life.

The manner of solemnizing the Marriage Covenant among Friends is peculiar, and is the result of a high estimate of its import-

ance. We know of no warrant in Scripture, either under the Mosaic law or in the Christian dispensation, for the intervention of ministerial authority. Believing that God alone could join in this solemn covenant, our forefathers were not satisfied to call upon Priest or Magistrate, and being made bold to disclaim any such interference, through much suffering they were instrumental in obtaining the liberty that we enjoy. They also discarded the assumed superiority of man in the Marriage Covenant, making the dependence of the husband and wife mutual, and their obligations reciprocal.

Shall we not herein hold fast whereunto we have attained, and seek a qualification to withstand every influence that would tend

to a departure from our high estimate of marriage and our simple and appropriate mode of solemnizing it?

This counsel, given with an earnest desire for the present and future welfare of all our members, is commended to their calm and dispassionate reflection.

We would also recommend the careful perusal of our Discipline, from which the extracts which follow are selected.

Signed by direction and on behalf of the Meeting,

EDWARD PARRISH,
LYDIA GILLINGHAM.

Clerks.

PHILADELPHIA, *First month, 1868.*



Extracts from the Discipline
or
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

"The parties making proposals of marriage are to communicate their intentions to the Men's and Women's Monthly Meeting in writing, signed by them both, in the following manner:

"To the Monthly Meeting of

With Divine permission, and Friends' approbation, we intend Marriage with each other.

Signed.

“Whereupon, if they belong to the same meeting, a Committee of men and women Friends should be appointed to make inquiry respecting the clearness of the parties from other similar engagements. If they have parents or guardians, their consent should be expressed in the meeting or produced in writing, when it is practicable or may reasonably be obtained. Should the woman be a widow, having children, the Committee are to see that the rights of the children are legally secured. At the next meeting, if the Committee report that inquiry has been made, and no obstruction to the further proceeding appears, the Monthly Meeting may leave the parties at liberty to accomplish their marriage, according to our Order, at a public meeting, or at such other

time and place as it may approve, except on the First day of the week, and appoint two Friends of each sex to have the oversight thereof. If any member is about to marry without the limits of the Monthly Meeting of which he or she is a member, care should be taken to procure a certificate from the Monthly Meeting they belong to of their right of membership and clearness from any other person with respect to marriage, and produce the same in the Monthly Meeting in which the proposal of marriage is made.

"It is affectionately advised that marriages be accomplished decently, gravely, and weightily, and that the parties themselves, their parents, and others concerned,

do take care that moderation be observed, and no reproach arise or occasion of offence be given, but that all behave with such sobriety as becomes a people fearing God. If anything to the contrary be observed, the Overseers or other concerned Friends present ought in brotherly love to admonish to a better behavior. And the said Overseers are to make report to the next Monthly Meeting whether this advice concerning good order and moderation has been observed, and take care that the Marriage certificate be recorded.*

“That marriages of persons nearly related

* The form of which will be found in our Book of Discipline.

by consanguinity may, as much as in us lies, be prevented, this Meeting concludes, that no marriage between any so near akin as first cousins shall be permitted amongst us. The term 'first cousins' applies to every description of grandchildren descended from one common grandparent.

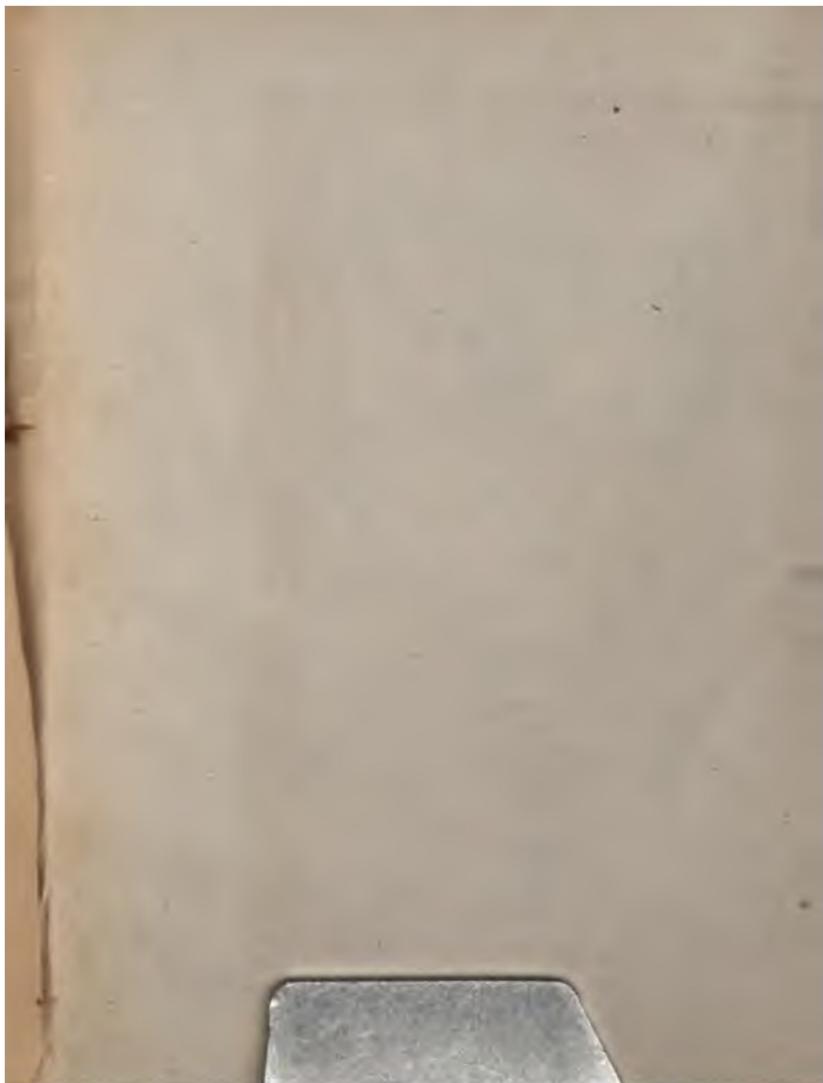
"As there are many persons not in membership with us, who are not of other principles or professions of religion, but who manifest an interest in the maintenance of our testimonies, it is concluded that, when any such person is about to proceed in marriage with a member, he or she shall be at liberty to make application to the men and women Overseers of the Monthly Meeting to which the member belongs; when, if the

Overseers are satisfied, the proposals of marriage may be laid before the Monthly Meeting in the usual form, and the Meeting shall make inquiry, and have the same care and oversight of the marriage, and proceed in the manner prescribed by the Discipline when both parties are members of the same Monthly Meeting. But these proceedings shall not give a right of membership to such persons or their offspring."











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